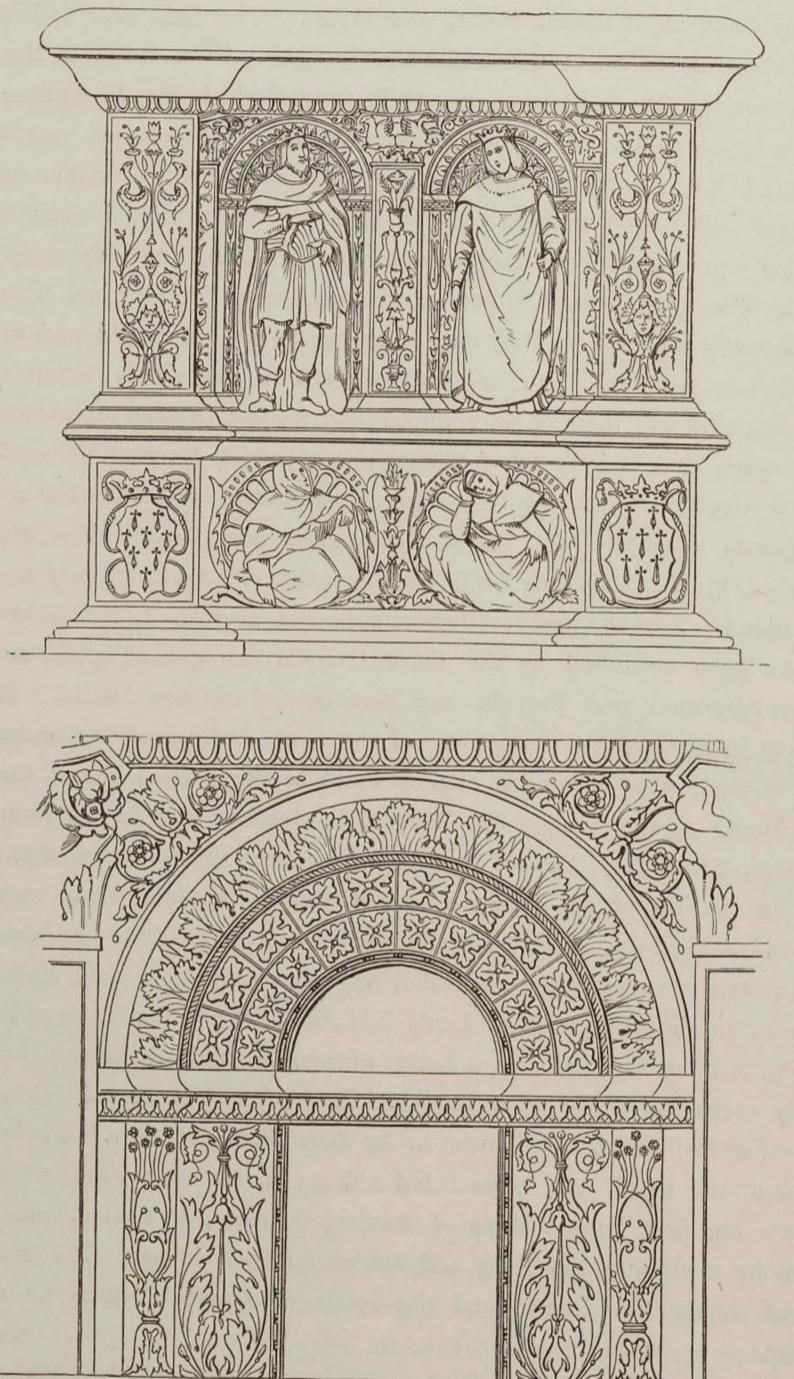


RENAISSANCE ORNAMENT.

beautiful carvings in alto and basso reliefo, which ornament the whole exterior of the choir of the Cathedral of Chartres; the subjects are taken from the lives of our Saviour and the Virgin, and from forty-one groups, fourteen of which are the work of Jean Texier, who commenced in 1514, after completing that part of the new clock-tower erected by him. These compositions are full of truth



Portions of the Tomb of Francis II., Duke of Brittany, and his wife, Marguerite de Foix, erected by Anne of Brittany in the Carmelite Church, at Nantes, by Michel Colombe, A.D. 1507.

and beauty, the figures animated and natural, the drapery free and graceful, and the heads full of life; but the arabesque ornaments, which almost entirely cover the projecting parts of the pilasters, friezes, and mouldings of the base, are, perhaps, the most beautiful portions; they are very diminutive

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in size; the largest of the groups, which are those which cover the pilasters, being only eight or nine inches in breadth. Though so minute, the spirit of the carving, and variety of devices in these ornaments, are marvellous. Masses of foliage, branches of trees, birds, fountains, bundles of arms, satyrs, military ensigns, and tools belonging to various arts, are arranged with much taste. The F. crowned—the monogram of Francis I.—is conspicuous in these arabesques, and the dates of the years 1525, 1527, and 1529, are traced upon the draperies.

The tomb which Anne of Brittany caused to be erected to the memory of her father and mother was finished and placed in the choir of the Carmelite Church at Nantes on the 1st of January, 1507. It is the master-piece of an artist of great ability and *naïveté*—Michel Colombe. The ornamental details are peculiarly elegant. The monument to Cardinal d'Amboise, in the Cathedral at Rouen, was begun in the year 1515, under Roulant le Roux, master mason of the Cathedral. No Italian appears to have assisted in its execution, and we may, therefore, fairly regard it as an expression of the vigour with which the Renaissance *virus* had indoctrinated the native artists.

It was in 1530 and 1531 that Francis I. invited Rosso and Primaticcio into France, and those distinguished artists were speedily followed by Nicolo del' Abbatte, Luca, Penni, Cellini, Trebbati, and Girolamo della Robbia. With their advent, and the foundation of the school at Fontainebleau, new elements were introduced into the French Renaissance, to which we shall subsequently advert.

It would exceed the limits of our present sketch to enter fully into the historical details connected with the art of wood-carving. It may suffice to point out that every ornamental feature available for stone, marble, or bronze, was rapidly transferred also to wood-work, and that at no period of the history of Industrial Art has the talent of the sculptor been more gracefully brought to bear upon the enrichment of sumptuous furniture. Our Plates, Nos. LXXXI. and LXXXII., furnish brilliant evidence of the justice of our remarks on this head. The attentive student, however, as he goes over them, will be unable to avoid perceiving a gradual withdrawing from the original foliated ornament which formed the stock in trade of the early Renaissance artists. He will next notice a heaping up of various objects and “capricci,” derived from the antique, accompanied by a fulness of projection and slight tendency to heaviness; and then, finally, he will recognise the general adoption of a particular set of forms differing from the Italian, and altogether national, such as the conventional volute incised with small square or oblong indentations (Plate LXXXI. Figs. 17 and 20), and the medallion heads (Plate LXXXI. Figs. 1 and 17).

The dawning rays of the coming revival of Art in France can scarcely be traced in the painted glass of the fifteenth century. The ornaments, canopies, foliage, and inscriptions, are generally *flamboyant* and angular in character, although freely and crisply made out, and the figures are influenced by the prevailing style of drawing. The glass, although producing a pleasing effect, is much thinner—especially the blue—than that of the thirteenth century. An immense number of windows were executed during this epoch, and specimens are to be found more or less perfect in almost every large church in France. St. Ouen, at Rouen, has some fine figures upon a white quarry ground in the clerestory windows; and good examples of the glass of the century will be found in St. Gervais at Paris, and Notre Dame at Chalons-sur-Marne.

Many improvements were introduced into the art at the epoch of the Renaissance. The first masters were employed to make cartoons; enamel was used to give depth to the colours without losing the richness, and much more white was employed. Many of the windows are very little more than grisailles, as those designed by Jean Cousin for the Sainte Chapelle at Vincennes; one of those representing the angel sounding the fourth trumpet is admirable both in composition and drawing. The Cathedral of Auch also contains some exceedingly fine examples of the work of Arneaud Demole; Beauvais also possesses a great deal of the glass of this period, especially a very fine Jesse window,